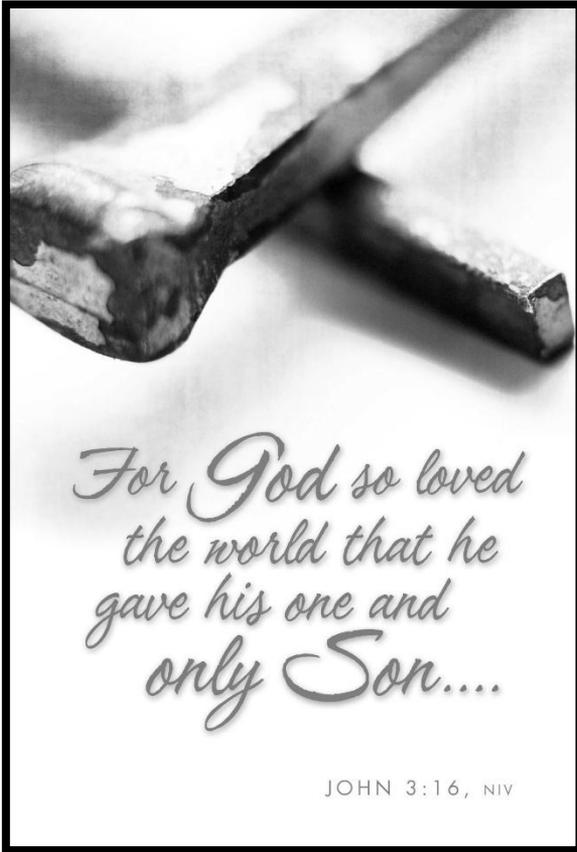


Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



✠ Holy Communion ✠

Second Sunday in Lent

March 1, 2026



SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

C: Amen

P: Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out
all offenses.

Kneel

P: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:
Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:
Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of
the Spirit: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdain
the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of
your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding
Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound.
 Through faith, the free gift of God,
 you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ.
 In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.
 The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead
 dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts,
 and gives you life and peace.

C: Amen

Stand

GATHERING HYMN

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

1 In the cross of Christ I glo - ry, tow'r - ing
 2 When the woes of life o'er - take me, hopes de -
 3 When the sun of bliss is beam - ing light and
 4 Bane and bless - ing, pain and plea - sure, by the

o'er the wrecks of time. All the light of
 ceive, and fears an - noy, nev - er shall the
 love up - on my way, from the cross the
 cross are sanc - ti - fied; peace is there that

sa - cred sto - ry gath - ers round its head sub - lime.
 cross for - sake me; lo, it glows with peace and joy.
 ra - diance stream - ing adds more lus - ter to the day.
 knows no mea - sure, joys that through all time a - bide.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

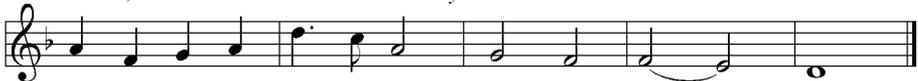
C: And also with you.

KYRIE

A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **C** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:



A Chri - ste e - le - i - son: **C** Christ, have mer - cy.
Christ, have mer - cy:



A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **C** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

Sit

WORD**FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a**

God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.

A: A Reading from Genesis:

¹ The LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and

the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

^{4a} So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 121

The cantor sings the refrain; the congregation repeats it.

I lift up my eyes to the hills;
my help comes from the LORD.

Sung responsively between the cantor and congregation.

- ¹ I lift up my eyes | to the hills;
from where is my | help to come?
- ² **My help comes | from the LORD,**
the maker of heav- | en and earth.
- ³ The LORD will not let your | foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you | fall asleep.
- ⁴ **Behold, the keep- | er of Israel**
will neither slum- | ber nor sleep; R
- ⁵ the LORD watches | over you;
the LORD is your shade at | your right hand;
- ⁶ **the sun will not strike | you by day,**
nor the | moon by night.
- ⁷ The LORD will preserve you | from all evil
and will | keep your life.
- ⁸ **The LORD will watch over your going out and your | coming in,**
from this time forth for- | evermore. R

SECOND READING: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.

A: A Reading from Romans:

¹ What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴ Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵ But to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

¹³ For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

¹⁶ For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, ¹⁷ as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"), in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

C Re - turn to the Lord, your God, re - turn to the Lord, your



God, who is grac - ious and mer - ci - ful, slow to



an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

GOSPEL: John 3:1-17

A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St John, the third chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ² He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person." ³ Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

¹¹ "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷ "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON..... Pastor Amme

Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY *Lift High the Cross*

Refrain

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro-claim Till

all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.

1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our cap - tain trod,
 2 Led on their way by this tri - um - phant sign,
 3 All new - born sol - diers of the Cru - ci - fied tree,
 4 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,

Refrain

Our king vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.
 The hosts of God in con - qu'ring ranks com - bine.
 Bear on their brows the seal of him who died.
 As thou hast prom - ised, draw us all to thee.

5 So shall our song of triumph ever be:
 Praise to the Crucified for victory! *Refrain*

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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 INTERCESSION

A brief silence is held after the introduction.

P: Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray
for the world and its needs.

After each petition:

P: Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

The prayers conclude:

P: Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and
salvation.

C: Amen

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The pastor and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you. R: Peace be with you.

Sit

MEAL

OFFERING

The Offering is received as the Lord's table is prepared.

ANTHEM

O Holy Jesus*.....*Ruth Elaine Schram

Stand

OFFERTORY

As the gifts are presented, the Offertory is sung

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 to me the
 joy of your sal-va - tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir - it.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

C: O God, maker of heaven and earth,
 your steadfast love embraces all creation.
 You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth
 and bring forth its bounty.
 Through these gifts of bread and wine,
 draw us into the death and life of your Son,
 who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.
 We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and
 might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.
 In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
 who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
 who preached good news to the poor,
 and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.
 In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread,
 and gave thanks; broke it,
 and gave it to his disciples,
 saying: Take and eat;
 this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper,
he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink,
saying: This cup is
the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people
for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection,
and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever.

C: Amen

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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Come to the table.

Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

C: Thanks be to God.

☩ 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, grant us peace.

Sit

COMMUNION

All baptized believers are invited to this holy meal. Those not communing are invited for a blessing. Please follow the instructions of the ushers to gather at the altar table. As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.

The communicant may say: Am

COMMUNION HYMN *God Loved the World*

1 God loved the world so that he gave his on - ly
 2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith, who was made
 3 If you are ill, if death draws near, this truth your
 4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son, for - gives all
 5 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly

Son the lost to save, that all who would in
 flesh and suf - fered death; all who con - fide in
 trou - bled heart can cheer: Christ Je - sus res - cues
 sins that you have done, and jus - ti - fied by
 Spir - it, Three in One! To you, O bless - ed

him be - lieve should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.
 Christ a - lone are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.
 us from death; that is the firm - est ground of faith.
 Je - sus' blood, your bap - tism grants the high - est good.
 Trin - i - ty, be praise now and e - ter - nal - ly!

Text: *Gesangbuch*, Bollhagen, 1791; tr. August Crull, 1846–1923, alt.
 Music: ROCKINGHAM ÖLD, Edward Miller, 1731–1807, adapt.

Stand

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

C: Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

God of our salvation,
we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls,
reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey.
Through the body and blood of your Son,
may we become Christ's body in the world,
bearing witness to your love for all creation,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

SENDING

BLESSING

P: Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity:

God, who calls all things into existence,
Jesus Christ, who redeems us,
and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation,
✠ bless you now and always.

C: Amen



SENDING HYMN *Blessed Assurance*

1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,

Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.
 an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.
 watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.

Refrain

This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:

this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915
 Music: ASSURANCE, Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830–1908

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Fred Harbaugh, Jean Nolan, Diana Rooker, Susan Christ, Greg Eckenrod; **Lay Asst:** Georgette Copp; **Comm. Asst.:** Sherri Holtzman; **Acolyte:** Doriann Morris; **Altar Guild:** Sue Shoemaker, Yvonne Kaiser; **Greeters/Presenters:** Don and Mary Ellen Rosenbaum
Cantor: Bob Schweppenheiser; **Flower Delivery:** Charles Luppert

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Christopher G. Solomon, Naomi and Samuel Kreger, Carl, Annalie and Kathleen Solomon by their family.

The Basket of Flowers is given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of David L. Riley, Carol Riley and David Riley, Jr. by David and Emily Bausinger, Connie and Gary Hess and their families.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Messiah Church! It is our joy to have you worship with us. If you are visiting, please make yourself known and leave your name & information to a congregation member. *We hope to see you again.*

Mark your calendars! Saturday, March 14, from 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm, join us in Shaheen Hall for a **Meet and Greet**. This will give you an opportunity to meet with the candidate for Senior Pastor. Light refreshments will be served.

On Sunday, March 15, all members are invited to attend Worship and a special congregational meeting. A candidate for senior pastor will lead the worship service. **Your vote matters!** Immediately, following the service, we encourage all members to remain for a special congregational meeting to vote on extending an official call to this candidate. We look forward to seeing you on **Sunday, March 15, 2026.**

Saints in Song will lift our voices to sing praise to God during worship on Sunday, March 15th. If you like to sing, you are invited to join with the choir that day for an anthem that is easy to learn and is based on "Amazing Grace". Rehearsals will be after worship on March 8 and before worship on March 15 at 8:45. Please join us.

The Kids Lent Event will be held Saturday, March 21st from 9 - noon. Registration forms can be found online or in the alleyway entrance. We are still in need of volunteers so if you are able and willing to help please contact me as soon as you can. Thank you in advance for your continued support of these wonderful outreach programs for the children in our communities.

Are you handy with a screwdriver? If so, we could use some help putting together a couple of table games for in the Harry Seltzer Room. Please contact me or the office.
Kathryn Pratt

Please join us Wednesday nights for our Lenten Vespers at 6:30 pm. We look forward to seeing you!

Copies of Behold Your King! a Lenten Devotional Booklet and Lenten Self-Denial Calendars & Banks are available in the Narthex,

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

JARED GIST, ORGANIST

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A New Thing Is Underway

“How can anyone be born after having grown old?” asks Nicodemus (John 3:4), articulating a question that we as the church continue to ask today. Change is hard. Transformation seems impossible. And yet, Jesus responds that in baptism we are made as new as if we had been born again, with a new heart able to perceive the reign of God. All things are possible with God!

Nicodemus is justifiably perplexed by this proclamation. We may resonate with his confusion as we look at the world around us and in the mirror before us, wondering if anything can ever truly change. Can the violence and suffering of war ever truly end? Can this broken relationship be mended? Can this illness be healed? Can hatred, oppression, and abuse be thwarted, transformed by the power of love? When we look around us, change may seem in short supply.

And yet, when we get curious, we may also become aware of signs of change, transformation, and rebirth emerging all around us. In northern regions, we can see the melting snow and first shoots of green from rousing plants, signaling the change from winter to spring. We can see mutual aid networks, community care efforts, and collective action emerge in response to social and political chaos. We can sense the tug of the Holy Spirit on our hearts, calling us toward deeper humility, compassion, and solidarity as we live in the hope of Christ.

The Lenten call—to set down what we can to attend more fully to God—draws us into a posture of curiosity that may deepen our awareness of the small but potent ways God’s kingdom is already breaking in all around us. “Do not be astonished,” says Jesus (v. 7); a new thing is underway.

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